

AN

# ORATION

BEFORE THE

DEMOCRACY OF WORCESTER AND VICINITY,

DELIVERED AT WORCESTER, MASS.,

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BY O. A. BROWNSON.

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# ORATION.

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FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS :

WE cannot assemble on this day without lively emotion. Too many associations cluster around it, and it marks an epoch too important in the annals of our race, for us to meet its yearly return with indifference. We hail it as the birthday of our Republic; we also hail it as the birthday of Freedom to the long oppressed and down-trodden masses.

The story of the American Revolution has often been told; and the praises of those to whose wisdom, foresight, bravery, and self-sacrifice we owe it that we are a free people, have not remained unsung. The story is full of interest, but as a mere story it may be matched elsewhere; and the prominent actors in the struggle which resulted in our political independence, though seldom surpassed in the nobler deeds and nobler qualities of men, have been equalled, and may be again. They, and the special events in which they took their part, viewed simply as individuals, and as particular events, shrink into insignificance before the sublime cause which was then at stake;

before the American Revolution regarded in its place in universal history, and in its bearing on the future progress of mankind.

In truth, only those events are worthy of commemoration, which concern universal Humanity, and which therefore have a place in universal history. Whatever is purely individual passes away and leaves no trace; what concerns merely an individual people, is temporary and local in its nature, and is therefore without power to touch the universal heart. Individuals die; nations die; but the race is immortal; and individuals and nations become worthy of consideration only as they contribute to the life and growth of the race. Our Revolution, did it mark merely the political independence of the Colonies on the mother country, and the establishment of a national government for themselves, might indeed have its interest for us, American citizens; but it would be without a place in the history of mankind, and could call forth little enthusiasm from the philosopher or the philanthropist. Its importance arises from the fact that far other interests than those of a few colonists and their descendants, were in question,—from the fact that, in the Providential chain of events, the American Revolution was a Revolution for the race.

The question of American Independence on England, was of course debated and decided in our Revolution; but there was also debated, and, to the eye of the philosopher, decided, a question of far graver import, and of far more thrilling interest. In the debate between the colonists and the mother country, entire Humanity mingled. Man's whole future was there under discussion, and on the issue of that debate, it depended whether the human race should be held back in endless thrall, hopeless bondage; or be suffered to continue its line of march through the ages to the completion of its destiny. The whole question of modern civilization was there, and eve-



ry success gained by the American forces over the British, was a success gained to civilization itself.

Here is wherefore we have a right to commemorate this day; and wherefore we exult in its clustering associations, its thrilling incidents, its proud recollections, without subjecting ourselves to the charge of national prejudice, or of national vanity. We meet as American citizens, it is true; but we meet, also, as men, and it is even more as men than as citizens that we exult. We commemorate the triumph of the Colonists over transatlantic tyranny; we commemorate, also, one of the proudest of Time's victories for Humanity.

But what was the cause, what was the question debated in our revolution? What was the victory then gained to civilization? We comprehend not the American Revolution, we grasp not its real meaning till we are able to answer these and all similar questions; not indeed till we can separate it from the special controversy between the colonists and the king and parliament of Great Britain, and view it in its bearings on the general progress of the race.

Humanity may be viewed as a vast collective being with a life and a growth of its own, in some sense, independent of the individuals who compose it. Without individuals there would, of course, be no race; but he who can see in the human race only individuals, has no reason to applaud himself for the keenness or extent of his vision. There is Man as well as men, and the life and progress of men, become to us matters of interest only as they are subsidiary to the life and progress of Man.

Humanity viewed as a vast collective being, has a life and a growth of its own, and strictly analogous to the life and growth of individuals. It has its infancy, youth, adolescence, manhood and mature age. These are the

successive stages in its career of civilization, and mark its progress towards the fulfilment of its destiny in time and space.

The infancy of the race is the savage state. In this state man contains the elements of all he can ever become; but contains them undeveloped and for the most part inoperative. The savage state is that of mere individuality. It embosoms, indeed, the elements of society, but not society itself. Each individual is his own centre; a whole in himself, and not a member of the community. He fishes, hunts, makes war on his own account; not in subordination to a life, to interests and wants paramount to his own. His state, therefore, cannot be the definitive state of man; for the simple reason that it gives little or no scope to two essential and indestructible elements of human nature,—the moral and the social.

Man is created with a conscience. He is by his very constitution placed under law,—made accountable to a power above himself. He may do, not what he will, but what he has the right to do. He makes progress only in proportion as this moral law,—the law of eternal justice,—becomes more and more clear and precise to his understanding, and able to exert more and more influence over his heart.

The priest seizes upon this element of man's nature,—possesses himself of it as his patrimony; and by its aid founds Theocracy, which is the first step Humanity takes in its career of civilization. The priesthood, by the force of the moral element, or of conscience, curbs the wild freedom of the savage, and breaks down his proud individuality. It brings him under a moral rule, a dominion foreign to himself; in theory that of the Divinity;—in practice that of the priesthood, which in the end proves to be the worst of all possible tyrannies, for it enslaves the soul as well as the body.



But man is not a moral being only. He has a conscience; he has also a heart,—affections which bind him to his kind, as well as a moral sense which gives him a relation to his Maker. He is not made to be alone. Alone, he can never attain to manhood, comprehend aught of the deep mysteries of his being, or fulfil his destiny. He is made capable of loving; and he is never man in the full significance of the term, till he has loved, and with a love that can triumph over time and all its mutations; over pain, sickness, sorrow, and the grave; and bloom in immortal beauty where all else has become withered and dry. Love unites Adam to Eve, and Eve to Adam; and from all-creating love proceeds the family, then society, and then the state. Society is the creation of Love. Love is its source, its basis, and its cement. On this element of our nature, under certain of its aspects, seizes the politician, and founds the city or state, civil society, or the body politic. The State once constituted, breaks down Theocracy, upheld by the priests, as Theocracy had broken down the individuality of the savage. The Israelites, weary of the priestly domination, demand a king, and Samuel is forced to anoint to the regal office, Saul, the son of Kish,—not a priest, but a mule-driver.

The savage state gives predominance to the element of individual freedom, and this constitutes its glory; but it gives little scope for the display of the moral and social elements of human nature, and this is its condemnation. Giving no scope to these, it admits of no common bond, no union, no co-operation, and, consequently, no progress. The savage state is not a progressive state. Savages accomplish nothing. Ages pass away and leave them as they were. Three thousand years have effected no improvement in the condition of the savage tribes, for instance, bordering on the Persian Gulf, and the descrip-

tion of them by the companions of Alexander, answers for them to-day, as well as on the day it was written.

Theocracy, which succeeds universally to the savage state, and constitutes the first epoch in the civilization of the race, accepts the moral element of human nature, and seeks to govern by virtue of ideas of right and wrong, of holy and unholy; but it breaks down the element of individuality, deprives the individual of all freedom, and establishes the heaviest of all despotisms. It also neglects the social nature. It smites the affections, or declares their indulgence sinful, unless first sanctioned by the priest. The State is but feeble, scarcely constituted, and wholly under the control of the priesthood. The individual counts for nothing in his own eyes, and therefore can count for nothing in the eyes of his brother. The race is completely subjugated, and enslaved, body and soul, individually and socially.

The Political Order, as we see it in Greece and Rome, accepts the social element, but makes too little account of the moral and individual. It emancipates the State, but not the individual; recognizes the rights of the city, but not the rights of man. For the rights of man, it gives us franchises and privileges. The State is held to be supreme. It assumes to regulate morals and opinions, and tolerates the priesthood only as one of its functionaries. In theory it has a right to do whatever it will, and the individual has no rights of his own which he may allege to stay its action. He is, therefore, enslaved to the state in like manner as under the theocratic rule, he had been to the priesthood. Liberty, in the broad sense of modern civilization, is unknown. A Roman orator apostrophizes liberty, it is true; but it is the liberty of the Roman citizen, not of man,—a liberty held as a grant from the city and revocable at will; not a liberty held by virtue of his nature and endowments as a human being. Hence slavery is regarded as no anomaly; and in the



freest and palmiest days of Greece and Rome, the slaves by far outnumber the freemen.

Here are the elements which must enter into every civilization worthy of the name; and must so enter as to preserve each its individuality, and yet be so blended as to form but a single whole. The true civilization of man, the beau ideal of that civilization after which Humanity struggles, and to which it will one day attain, is that in which the individual element exists in all the force of the savage state, the moral in all the force of the theocratic, and the social in all the force of the Political. Man is every where individually as free as the savage, as submissive to moral laws as theocracy enjoins, and as closely wedded to social order, to the community, as the state commands. This is the ideal of that civilization to which we should aspire.

As yet a civilization embracing these three elements, in both their severalty and their union, has, so far as history teaches, nowhere been realized. Over the greater part of the Asiatic world, the theocratic power was early established, and continues even to this day; and of the degraded condition of the great mass of the people, it is not necessary to speak. The political order first obtained in ancient Greece, and rose to its highest glory under the sway of imperial Rome. But Greece and Rome have passed away. The northern barbarians overran their territory, broke down their political rule, and prepared the European soil for a new order of civilization.

With the destruction of the Roman empire, commences a new order of civilization, the Christian civilization. This order accepts the three elements enumerated, and seeks to give to each its appropriate sphere and combine them all into a uniform and harmonious whole. As yet, it is in its infancy, at least far from having attained its full growth; but it embosoms the germs of a perfect civili-

zation, and possesses the necessary vitality and warmth to continue their development till they have attained their full growth.

The three elements, we have found, are all embraced by the order of civilization to which we belong. The element of individuality was introduced by the northern barbarians, and is found represented in modern history by the feudal baron. The moral element was introduced by Christianity, and has been represented by the Church. The political element has been perpetuated from imperial Rome, first under the form of imperial monarchy, representing the majesty of the state; and second, under that of the communes, towns,—whence the commons,—continuing the municipal regime of Republican Rome, and representing the majesty of society, or as we say in this country, the majesty of the people.

But though these elements all exist in modern civilization and constitute it, they have as yet existed only as separate, and, generally, as hostile powers. Each has struggled for exclusive dominion; and their struggle constitutes the life of modern society, and the subject matter of its history. The moral power, represented by the Church, struggled to re-establish theocracy, and seemed for a time likely to succeed. But it reached its culminating point under Gregory VII. and has since declined. Individuality triumphed for a time in the feudal regime, but at length succumbed to the combined forces of the monarch and the commons. Imperial monarchy tried to become supreme, but abdicated with Charles V. of Germany, and was beheaded in the persons of Charles Stuart of England, and Louis Capet of France. The commons, representing the majesty of society, tried their hand at empire, but were defeated in the dissolution of the Long Parliament, by Cromwell, and forced to a compromise, in what Englishmen call the Revolution of 1688. No one



has succeeded, no one has been destroyed; but their union remains to be effected.

The exclusive triumph of any one of these elements would have failed to secure to man his rights, or that social order his nature demands. Individuality as represented by the Feudal Baron, had it triumphed, would have led us back to the savage, and proved the destruction of all social order and of all moral order. If the Church had gained absolute ascendancy, it would not have been the ascendancy of moral ideas, but of the priesthood. The commons, whether as we see them in the free towns of Germany, and the Low Countries, in the South of France, and the Republics of Italy, or again as effecting the English Revolution in the seventeenth century, or the French in the eighteenth, had they triumphed, would by no means have realized true freedom for man. The parliament of Great Britain succeeded to all the powers and prerogatives of Charles Stuart, whom it had beheaded. The powers it wrested from the monarchy, it claimed for itself as a political body, not for the people as individuals; consequently, the people, as individuals, were no more free under the Commonwealth than they were under the Monarchy. France, in her Revolution attempted more, and went farther; but in the only political constitution she framed worthy of much consideration, the supremacy of the State was virtually preserved, and the rights of man as man, in contradistinction from the rights of the citizen, were by no means secured. The French Revolution is supposed to have failed, because it went too far in the path of freedom; future historians will, perhaps, contend that it failed because it went not far enough, stopped short of the goal, and shrunk from enfranchising the proletariat as well as the burgher.

If we study the feudal society, we shall find that in the epoch of its greatest prosperity, it constituted but a small portion of the whole population of the country. Grant,



then, that the feudal baron was a man, in the proper condition of a man, all below him must be below that condition. In sustaining, then, the feudal society, only a few individuals were sustained in their rights as men; and nothing was done for the great mass of the population. The great mass were necessarily left out of their proper condition as men, and far below their true rank as human beings.

The commons, by which we understand the people, were at first regarded as an inferior race, as ignoble. Whatever their talents, industry, wealth, they could not claim equality with the feudal society, and were perpetually subject to be harassed and trampled upon by the military barons and their retainers. Their success could therefore be secured only by organization; and their admission into the government must necessarily be as an organized body, as an order, or an estate.

As an estate, the Third Estate, we find them at an early period admitted into the States General of France, and Parliament of England. The French Revolution, was a revolution in favor of the Third Estate. The present king of France is the King of the Third Estate, a burgher-king, citizen-king, as he is called. The revolution in England, in the 17th century, was also a revolution in favor of the commons, or the burgher class, and the political equality of this class with the feudal society, was confirmed by the compromise of 1688.

But in gaining political equality in either France or England, for the burgher class, as a class, it by no means followed that the political equality of the individuals who composed it, was secured. This class is composed of traders, manufacturers, and artizans; but though it has, as an estate, as an order, as a body corporate, risen to its true elevation in the body politic, the great mass of the individuals of whom it is composed, remain to this

day in both England and France, without political significance, and far below the true rank of men.

Again, the feudal society, under another aspect represents the power or sovereignty which is supposed to be attached to the soil, to territory. Now, if we give absolute dominion to this society, constituted as it is throughout all Europe, we shall be very far from freeing the whole agricultural population. We shall free only the proprietors; but not the actual cultivators. Consequently we shall be far from restoring to every man the individual freedom which belongs to him.

The feudal society, or nobility, represents landed capital. This at the commencement of modern society is the only capital which possesses political importance. The possessors of this capital are the only portion of the population which has a right to political power. The King is suzerain or lord paramount, because he is the greatest landholder.

Now, so long as this was the case, capital invested in trade, in manufactures, was without political importance; and, unrepresented in the State, it was without power to protect itself. It was, therefore, insecure, and constantly exposed to encroachments from the possessors of landed capital. It is the vague tradition of this insecurity to capital employed in trade, that makes our business men even yet so timid in regard to the tenure of property, and so ready to see in the slightest movements of the laboring classes an attack on the rights of property or the possessions of the rich. Property employed in trade was once insecure, and the chiefs of industry were liable to be robbed; but not, as they would now fain make us believe, or as they may, through their ignorance of history, themselves believe, by the working men, the laboring poor; for these in no age, in no country of the world, have ever been known to strike at the rights of property, or to manifest a disposition to encroach on the possessions



of the rich. No: the insecurity to property was on the other side; and its owners were despoiled, not by the poor laborer, but by military knights and barons, the feudal nobility.

The first great struggle of modern society was therefore to protect what I may term commercial, or business capital, against landed capital; merchants, traders, manufacturers, artizans, against the owners of the soil, the great landed nobility. This struggle lasts from the twelfth century to nearly the close of the seventeenth, to the great Whig revolution in England, in 1688. The triumph of the English Whigs was the triumph of capital employed in business over that invested in land. The Whigs were the merchants, the traders, the manufacturers, the bankers, the fund-holders, and stock-jobbers. They chartered, against the earnest opposition of the Tories, the Bank of England; they sustained the East India Company in its monopoly, and in a word supported for England in the early part of the eighteenth century, precisely that policy which American Whigs advocate for this country, in the middle of the nineteenth; that is to say, more than one hundred years after the progress of events has superannuated it. The English whigs, however, succeeded in raising commercial capital to an equality with landed capital, and, therefore, the burgher class, politically, to an equality with the feudal nobility. They gained then all the protection needed for this portion of the general capital of the community, long before the epoch of our Revolution.

Taking our stand now at the general peace of Europe in 1767, we may say that the progress of modern society had by turns developed each element of modern civilization, and established a compromise between them; that it had brought up the commons or burgher class to a political equality, as an estate, with the nobility, and placed commercial, manufacturing, or business capital, on an equal footing, to say the least, with landed capital.



So much had been effected to realize the ideal of modern civilization. Two things remained to be done. First, to base the political organization on the great principles of immutable justice, piety and love, represented by the Church, and to make them the basis of all governmental measures and enactments; and secondly, to realize in the case of each individual man, in perfect harmony with the moral and social elements of his nature, that individual freedom and independence, of which Theocracy and the State had formerly deprived him. In other words, to bring up to a level with the great landed proprietor, each agricultural laborer; and with the merchant, manufacturer, and mechanical employer, each operative employed in trade, manufactures, or the mechanic arts. That is to say, the whole population, which at the time, in wealth, position, and attainments, ranked below the chiefs of the burgher class, and the owners of the soil. Or still again, to establish a perfect equality, not of class with class, but of man with man. To bring up not merely the laboring class, as a class, but each individual laborer, so that all should stand up with their feet on the same level; on the common level of Humanity, so that every man should be a man, nothing more and nothing less.

This was the great work to be done for civilization at the opening of our Revolution. The mission of this country is to emancipate labor, and to raise up the individual laborer to the level of a man. Our Revolution I regard, therefore, as the taking possession of this field for the performance of this work. The most that England could do, was to raise up the commons, as an estate, and secure equality to the chiefs of the industrial society with the landed nobility. Had we remained politically connected with her, we could have advanced no further. We could only have followed out the policy of the English whigs, and given commercial capital a su-

premacv over landed capital, and made our farmers and our whole agricultural population subordinate to our business population; we could, in short, only have done what our American whigs are at present trying to do.

We could not then have contributed aught to the great work of civilization. We should have had no mission of our own, no work to perform for Humanity, and, consequently no place in her history.

This work could not have been performed in the old world; for there society was monopolized by the few. Old institutions, prejudices and traditions must effectually oppose it. Nobility, whether landed or commercial, must war against it. It could be effected only on a virgin soil, where the soil should be divided among the great mass of the population, and not held by a few overgrown proprietors; where the plough should be in the hand of its owner, as one of your own sons has said with equal truth and eloquence; where the field of industry should be open to all, and the means of rising to independence placed in the hands of all. In Europe there was old hereditary monarchy to batter down, hereditary nobility to root out, church establishments to break up, and the ignorance of the great mass of the population to dispel, all matters surpassing the strength of the laborer and in opposition to the interests, or supposed interests, of all others. Nothing could be done there. Labor must be elevated elsewhere, and attain its rank on another soil. This other soil was the new world, which Providence had long held in reserve, and which was opened to the race just at the moment when in the progress of events it had become necessary. Our Revolution which severed the bonds which bound us to England, gave us the free control of this new world, placed us in possession of the field in which to perform the new work demanded by modern civilization. Hence it is that I said our Revolution was a revolution for the race, a revolution not mere-



ly for the benefit of the colonists, but for civilization itself.

We may now seize the meaning of the American Revolution. What was the grand idea it involved? It was a Revolution not in favor of the priesthood, nor of the State; not in favor of this class or of that; not in favor of feudal nobility, nor of the new commercial nobility; but in favor of man universally,—of man, who was to be advanced by raising up each individual laborer to the rank of a man, so that he should stand up an equal among men, with a manly spirit and a manly bearing. In effecting the American Revolution, our fathers pledged themselves to this work; in honoring their memories, and in accepting the Revolution, we in our turn pledge ourselves to this work, solemnly assure the old world and the new, that we are consecrated, soul and body, to the noble mission of making every laborer a free man, an equal to every other member of the community, so that justice shall be established on the earth, and equality henceforth universally reign between man and man.\*

If I have succeeded thus far in conveying to your minds, fellow citizens, the idea I have in my own mind, I have given you the sense of the American Revolution, and a clear statement of the great mission our country is charged to execute for mankind. Now as American statesmen or as American citizens, we should keep this

\* This word equality has a frightful meaning for many good folks. Although I mean much by it, I am far from meaning that all men must become of exactly the same size in mind, in body, or in possessions. What I oppose is not the natural diversity there may be between man and man, but the artificial inequality which has been introduced. I complain not that another man is taller than I am; but I am by no means willing that a man, short by nature, should contrive to stand with his feet on my shoulders, and then look round on the multitude and exclaim, "See how tall I am!" What I demand is, that all men stand with their feet on the same level, and each one pass for what he is. If, when standing up by my side, with your feet on the same level with mine, you are taller than I, by the head and shoulders,—why thank God for your height, I shall not murmur.



work ever in view. It is the standard by which we should try the merit of all parties and measures. Knowing now what there is to be done, what we are to aim at, we know how to decide what party is the true American party, and what measures are warranted by American principles.

I have, as you will now perceive, had constantly in my mind, even in giving you this historical and philosophical account of civilization in general, the practical questions of the day. My aim has been to get at the principles which should govern the American statesman. America, in the disposition of events, by Providence, has received a great work to perform,—a work for universal civilization, a work in which the whole human race is interested. This work her statesmen are bound to consult, and their worth arises solely from their ability to perform it, and of their fidelity to it. You and I, fellow citizens, hold to day the place of judges. We constitute the tribunal before which the candidates for office must plead; and important is it that we understand what we should demand of those who seek to be entrusted with power: that we know what is the end the statesman should aim at, so that we may know whether the candidates are or are not worthy of our suffrages.

It matters little who are the men, viewed simply as individuals, who may be placed at the head of affairs; but if this country have a mission and a destiny, there must be for it a true policy and a false. But which is the true policy, and which the false, we can determine only by determining what is the work given us to accomplish.

What might be true public policy at one epoch in the progress of society, and in one country, may be false and mischievous in another; because the end to be gained is different. At one time, in European countries, it is undoubtedly the true policy to raise up the business

community, to protect business capital against the overwhelming influence of landed capital. But when the burgher class has become the equal of the feudal, the business community the peer of the nobility, then the strengthening of business capital, the multiplication of its facilities and safeguards, ceases to be the legitimate policy. The good contemplated by that policy is already gained, and its continuance can therefore be productive only of evil.

The policy of the English Whigs under Queen Ann, and at the accession of the House of Brunswick to the British throne, was, undoubtedly, to a great extent, the policy demanded for the advancement of modern civilization. It was the only policy which could effectually break down the old landed Aristocracy, and refute the old notion that none but a freeholder ought to be entrusted with the right of suffrage; in other words, the notion that sovereignty is an incident of territory or land, and not of Humanity. The importance given to commerce and manufactures, to capitalists engaged in these pursuits, was the only remedy, then practicable, for the evils transmitted from the feudal ages. The support, the special support, of merchants, manufacturers, bankers, fund-holders, stock-jobbers even, was then demanded by Humanity, and was the only means at hand of advancing society.

But when the feudal society is humbled, and territorial rights abolished, when real estate no longer possesses any undue advantages over personal or moveable, when the work to be done is not to protect the business community against the proprietors of the soil; but that of elevating the proletariat, rather than the burgher, the employed, rather than the employer;—in a word, each individual of the whole class of workingmen, then this policy loses its legitimacy, and ceases to be in harmony with the new wants of the times, with the new interests



of Humanity which the progress of events has developed.

Here then we may see which of the two parties now dividing our country is deserving of our support;— which of these parties supports a policy in harmony with the great work we have already determined to be the work assigned by Providence to the American people.

The American Whig policy is unquestionably the same in substance with the policy of the old English Whigs. Our American Whigs proceed on the ground that America is England, and on the ground, too, that the world has stood still for the last one hundred and fifty years. The great events which have transpired since 1688, have, in their estimation, changed nothing, for the simple reason, it may be presumed, that they themselves during this long period have learned nothing. They belong to that unfortunate class of mortals whose faces are on the back sides of their heads, and who, therefore, have no power of seeing what is before them.

Go back to the foundation of your government, and you see at once that their policy is that of the English Whigs. Alexander Hamilton was a great man, and no doubt a sincere patriot; but his policy was to found government mainly for the protection of capital, and especially of business capital. When he came into the government as Secretary of the Treasury, his avowed policy was to favor the business portion of the community. He labored to foster the banks, and to create, for the protection of the government, an army of fund-holders and stock-jobbers, who should be specially interested in sustaining it. He seems always to proceed on the ground that the great study of the statesman should be to protect the government against the people. This, according to him, can be done only by giving to the business community a special interest in the government.

This is the key to the whole system of Hamiltonian politics.

How had England sustained herself against the crown and aristocracy? Assuredly by raising up a commercial nobility and by lending the patronage of the government to the chiefs of industry. The same, said Hamilton, must be done here; without reflecting that here there were no crown and landed nobility to guard against, and without its entering his head, that it might be precisely against this business community that the people might need to be protected. This was nothing. The people might trammel the government. Hence, he advocates a national bank, funds the national debt, and makes the banks the organs of the business community, the depositaries of the revenues of the government. Now this policy is precisely that of the Whig party of to-day. This explains much of the language they use. The country they tell us is ruined! Why? Because we have ceased to cultivate the earth, or because the earth refuses to yield her increase? No. The earth has lost none of her productive energy, and rewards, as well as ever, the labors of the husbandman. Because the people have nothing to eat, drink, or wear; because they are so poor they cannot command the necessaries and comforts of life? No. There was never a time since the settlement of this country when the great mass of the people fed better, were better clad, or better lodged than now. Where then is the evidence of this grand ruin which has befallen the country? In what does this ruin consist? Simply in the fact that mere business men have not at this moment the same relative advantage over the rest of the community that they had or fancy they had a few years ago. It is not a time when men can make and lose fortunes three or four times a day by speculations in eastern and western lands, by the mere transfer, or hypothetical transfer, of



stocks. Evidently it is not quite so favorable to business men, as it might be; and as the business men deem themselves the whole community, as they take their own prosperity to be the measure of the general prosperity of the country, and as they are not so prosperous as they were, or as they think they were, they conclude, very logically, that the country is ruined.

There is no insincerity in this. Their principle, so far as principle they have, is to advance the general prosperity of the community, by affording, through the aid of government, special encouragement to business, to the chiefs of industry. In accordance with this principle, one of your own townsmen, an honorable Senator, when Governor of this Commonwealth, lamented much the sufferings of the poor laborer, for he is a kind hearted man, and is always touched by the sufferings of the poor. But what remedy did he then propose? Simply the laying of a high tariff, which should raise the price of manufactures, and thus enable manufacturers to pay their workmen higher wages. This was his policy then, as it is, no doubt, the honest policy of his party now.

Now, what is this policy, but simply affording special encouragement to the business men, that the business men, without diminishing their own gain, may give higher wages to their workmen? In plain English, it is for government to take care of the rich, that the rich may take care of the poor; which in effect is not unlike protecting the wolves that the wolves may protect the sheep.

Look over the community; who constitute the American Whig party? The chiefs of this party we all know are the chiefs of the business community, as distinguished from the agricultural and laboring community. They are our merchants, manufacturers, bankers, fundholders, owners of stock and directors of rail roads and other corporations,—speculators, men who wish to make

their fortunes without adding anything to the wealth or prosperity of the community,—bankrupt speculators, who were once rich on paper, but who now find themselves in the condition of what an English writer, not inaptly, calls gigmanity disgiged,—men whose respectability depends on the fact that they sport a gig; and who now find themselves without the wherewithal to sport a gig; who, by the bye, never sported a gig save only on credit, and who now find credit difficult to obtain. These constitute the Whig party,—at least its leaders,—and the great mass of those we meet on rail roads, in steam boats, marching in processions, with banners flying, or congregating in log cabins, singing the praises of hard cider, and drinking—champaign.

Think not that it is by accident that these men are the chiefs, ay, and rank and file too, of the Whig party. Nothing takes place in this world by accident. There is a reason for all things which take place, and a sort of necessity for them to fall out very much as they do. These men are men who think only of business, and who have no conception of any good to a country, which is not a special good to the trader and speculator. Now, the fact that these men are Whigs, and that the great mass of the men of this character in our whole country are partizans of Whiggism, is good proof that the Whig policy is precisely what I have described it to be, that of the old English Whigs, the policy of protecting the business community in preference to all other classes; the policy which assigns to government as its primary, almost its sole duty, that of affording facilities to business capital, or capital invested simply in trade in some one or all of its ramifications.

I stand not here to speak against trade, nor to under-rate the importance of the business community; but I do stand here to say, and to make it believed if I can, that the special protection and encouragement by gov-



ernment of the business community, is by no means furthering the great work given us to do. You will bear in mind, that the American work is not to raise up the burgher class to equality with a feudal nobility, for that work was done before our Revolution; nor to give to commercial capital a supremacy over landed capital, the business community a supremacy over the agricultural community; because, here the soil is so divided among small proprietors, that it cannot possibly exert more than its due share of influence: nor is it, in fact, to advance merely the chiefs of industry, landed proprietors, or mercantile and manufacturing employers as such; but the great mass falling below these, who are neither owners of land nor employers,—the working men, proletaries. Our mission is, so to elevate these, that each one shall be a proprietor as well as a laborer, a laborer not merely at wages, but on his own farm or in his own shop, possessing enough of the funds of production to be an independent workman on his own capital, as are already the great mass of our farmers. This is our work.

Now the Whig policy, under this point of view, is simply to afford special protection to the employer, and thus enable him to give higher wages to the workman. It contemplates no elevation of the workman, of the class which it is our special duty to elevate, beyond that of enhancing his wages. And it proposes to enhance his wages, not by diminishing the profits of the employer, but in fact by increasing them.

In the first place, then, suppose their policy to succeed; suppose the government by a high tariff or otherwise, so to increase the facilities for the profitable investment of capital that the employer can enhance the wages of his workmen without diminishing his own profits, what will be the result? The relative distance between the business community and the laboring com-

munity must remain, to say the least, as great as before. Nothing then would be gained on the score of equality. If the workman should actually receive more, compared with what he now receives, he would receive no more compared with the amount of profits obtained by his employer, and therefore would by no means receive, which after all is the main point, a greater share of the proceeds of his own labor.

But this is not all. The profits of the business community can be increased only by the enhanced prices of the commodities in which they deal. If these prices are actually enhanced, it can be only at the expense of labor. If the relation between the price of the article and the cost of the labor to produce it, remains the same, there can be no increase of profit to the dealer. Consequently, the supposed policy if carried into effect, would not enable the employer to enhance the wages of the laborer without diminishing his own profits, and therefore he would not enhance them.

But waive this. Suppose the prices of all articles are so raised that the manufacturer can pay his workmen higher wages without diminishing his profits. These wages can be only *nominally* higher, because the workman is in general a consumer to the full extent of his income, and consequently the increase of his wages is cancelled by the increased prices he must pay for the articles he consumes.

Suppose then that the Whig policy, in regard to labor and the laboring class, should be adopted, it would accomplish nothing for the laborer. It would effect nothing towards making him a proprietor, as he ought to be. It would at best merely keep him as he is, without making his condition essentially worse.

But the Whig policy goes further. The Whig party we all know is the Bank party, and at present, the



whole politics of the country is involved in the Bank question. This is *the* question of the times.

Now, what part of the community require banks? Moneyed men? Men of real capital who have money to lend? Rarely. For they could, so far as mere loaning of money is concerned, loan to as much advantage to themselves without banks, certainly without banks of issue, as with them. Are they demanded by the farmers, the men who own the plough and hold it? Not at all. These men care little for banks, except banks of earth, or banks of manure. They do not ask credit, they give credit. They trust the soil, that if with their hardy hands, they cultivate it with proper care, they shall be amply repaid. Do your mechanics, your simple artizans, who drive the plane, turn the auger, or handle the hammer and sledge, and last and awl,—do these ask loans from banks? No. They rarely go to your banks, and rarely obtain bank accommodations. Who then want banks? Simply your business men, your employers, traders and speculators. That is to say, your money borrowers. Banks are not wanted by money lenders, but by money borrowers. The men who besiege your legislatures for bank charters are not the men who have money to lend, but the men who have money to borrow. That is, they are men who wish to get into their possession the products of industry, without being under the necessity of giving an equivalent for them, till they have sold them, and realized an equivalent. The banks are a simple contrivance, by which the business community may command the products of industry, take the products of labor, and not pay the laborer for them, till they are sold, and sold for enough to pay the laborer, and the commission of the seller.

The advantages of a contrivance like this to the business men, need not be specified. These men are

enabled in the first place to monopolize the whole business of buying and selling. They are able in all cases to come between the consumer and producer, and to raise a premium from both. They can so arrange it that the producer cannot carry his own produce to market, and therefore so that they and not he can fix the prices of produce. This places both the producer and consumer at the mercy of the speculator. By means of bank facilities speculators can obtain credit; but as they are the bank owners, the credit they obtain costs them nothing. Able to make their own bank credit pass for actual payment on their purchases, at least for a time, they are able to give credit to those to whom they sell. This stimulates the community to buy, for there are few men who, if they can obtain credit, will not purchase more than they would if they must pay cash down.

By being able through their own facilities for obtaining credit, to give it, the business community come to be the creditor class, to bring the great mass of the people into debt to them. There have been times when nearly our whole agricultural and mechanical population were indebted to the trading community. Your farmer and artizan were indebted to the country trader, your country trader was indebted to your city trader, who in his turn was indebted to the importer or the manufacturer.

Now, I need not stop to speak of the influence of the creditor over the debtor, and the almost absolute control which the creditor class may exert over the debtor class. If the banking system can be sustained, then the class which that system benefits, can always stand in relation to the rest of the community as creditor to debtor. In this case, it may control its operations, and tax its labor almost at will. The support of the banking system then, has a direct tendency to elevate the business community at the expense of the agricultural and laboring community. It is therefore necessarily a part of the old



English Whig policy, and our Whigs in adopting it prove that their policy is the same with the British Whigs, and that they are at war with what we have proved to be the true American policy.

Let this policy once become that of the government, let its advocates once become possessed of the government, and with their immense creditor influence, fostered and sustained by nine hundred state banks, all held together and their power concentrated and directed to a common object, by means of a grand national bank, and we may easily see that every thing in this country must henceforth become subordinate to the trader and speculator. The farmer and common laborer will be merely operatives in the employ of the business man, political equality will be broken down, and the hope, of the laborer of one day becoming a man, deferred perhaps forever.

Here is the Whig policy, a policy well enough when the work of civilization was to break down an overgrown landed aristocracy, but the worst conceivable when the work is that of elevating the laborer. Elevating the laborer! What Whig dreams of elevating the laborer? There are those who laugh at the log cabin and hard cider. For my part I do not laugh at them. They speak to me an instructive lesson. They are to me the appropriate symbol of the party which adopts them. They say plainly as language can say, "Elevate us to power, adopt our policy, and there shall be palaces and champaign for us; but for you, O ye people, look for nothing better than log cabins and hard cider." I thank the Whigs for their honesty, I thank them for their frankness, in hanging out a banner that at once discloses their policy and what must be its results. For myself I honor the log cabin; for in it I drew my earliest breath, and spent my earliest and happiest days; but then the palace was not near to over-top it, and it did

not remind me that I was born to be a slave. I have no dread of the log cabin as such. I can breathe as freely and sleep as sweetly beneath its bark covered roof, as in the lordly palace; but then, I must be a freeman, enjoying the fruits of my own labor, not the slave of a wealthy nabob, who from my toil and sweat has erected the palace that looks down in contempt on my lowly dwelling place. But sustain the Whig policy, and you shall have log cabins for the working man, and palaces for the master; hard cider for the operative, champagne for his employer.

The whole manner of carrying on the present electioneering campaign, on the part of the whigs, proves that their policy is to benefit the capitalist and not the working man. They in all their proceedings, show the most sovereign contempt for the working-man's understanding. They claim to be his especial friends, and warn him against his real friends; but they seek to gain his vote by means which would sink him to a brute. They make no appeal to his good sense, they make no avowal of principles, which if carried out, would meliorate his condition. They address him as though he were one of a mere rabble to be caught by the largesses of some petty lordling, by pretty sights and pretty sounds. These whig songs, whig processions, and whig revelings, are not without meaning,—a meaning which will one day be thundered back upon their affrighted ears. If they wished to elevate the laboring classes, would they address them in a style that must degrade them, seek to brutalize them with hard cider, and induce them to part with their birthright of free men for a Harrison song?

But I joyfully turn from the Whig policy to the Democratic. Is the course of the democratic party more in harmony with true American principles than that of the whig party? Does the democratic party pursue the policy



demande by the great work Providence has given us to accomplish? I have defined the American Revolution to be, taking possession of the field in which we are to play our part. Of course, then, the first work is to keep possession of this field and to keep it open. We must not only maintain our political independence on foreigners, but also maintain an open field for freedom, that is, we must maintain a free government.

Now, if you for one moment glance at the extent of the American territory, you must see that this territory cannot be maintained sacred to freedom, if brought under our grand central government, however democratic might be the forms of that government. The interests of the different sections are so various, not to say hostile, the distance of each individual from the government, is so great, and the power which would fall to the lot of the ordinary citizen, is so little, that the government must soon break in pieces and dissolve in anarchy, or require so much power centralized in the government that none would be left to the individual citizen. The field is to be kept open to liberty only by dividing the powers of government, between one Federal government and many state governments. If we give to the Federal government sufficient power to control the states in their internal affairs, we deprive them of their character of governments, and render them merely ingenious contrivances for the administration of government. We have in fact a consolidated government. It is essential therefore, while we maintain the supremacy of the Federal government in all that concerns our relations as a people with foreigners, and of the several states with each other, we should still preserve the states in all else as distinct sovereignties, as independent states.

The whig party has always sought to encroach on the power of the states, and to strengthen that of the Union. But the democratic party, first took its rise in opposition

to this tendency. It first arose as a state rights party, and made its first stand on the fact that the states have not lost by the union, their political existence, nor in any sense parted with their sovereignty; that they have merely by mutual agreement, or compact, called the constitution, ordained that a certain portion of their sovereignty should be exercised by all the states in common, by means of a Federal government. Its great object has been to maintain this doctrine. The real question now before the American people, so far as concerns the Federal government, is, whether we shall maintain that government as a Federal government, or whether we shall suffer it to become a grand consolidated government. As a Federal government, it may be extended by the formation of new states over any conceivable extent of territory, over the whole continent, for instance, and thus secure the whole continent to freedom. But should it become a consolidated government, it would soon break in pieces, and several new governments would be formed, with separate and hostile interests, leading to war, and war would lead to a strong government, to monarchy, and then to despotism.

In contending then for state rights, and warring against the tendency to centralization,—the democratic party has been true to the idea of American institutions, and has been fulfilling the destiny assigned to the American people.

After gaining the field and maintaining it open to the cause of freedom, the next step was to realize, politically, that equality between man and man, which it is our mission to realize socially. Our government is not, like that of England, composed of three estates as the King, Lords, and Commons, the King, the Nobility, and People, each with a negative on the other. Our work was not to raise up the Commons to a political equality with the King and Nobility. This was done in England.



Moreover, the King and Nobility did not emigrate to this country. None but the Commons came. Consequently, there were none here but the people. All classes and all individuals of our society always have belonged, and do now belong to the people. The political equality here to be realized then was not the equality of class with class, but of man with man.

Now political equality between man is represented by universal suffrage. Universal suffrage, necessarily recognises each man as a member of the body politic by virtue, not of his possessions, his endowments, his accidents, but by virtue of his manhood. Universal suffrage can be sustained only on the ground that a man by virtue of his manhood is a member of the body politic. If every man is a member of the body politic by the simple fact that he is a man, then is every man, in so far as he is a man, politically equal to every other man. Furthermore universal suffrage gives to every man an equal voice in the political affairs of his country; every man an opportunity to bring forward to the public notice his own wants, interests and convictions, and thus compel the government to consult the good of all. It recognises every man to be a man, and lays the foundation, as it constitutes a means of social equality.

Now the whig party we know has always opposed universal suffrage. So opposed are they to it, and so little does it enter into their minds to sustain it, that the whig members of the legislature in their reply to the Chief Magistrate of this Commonwealth at the close of the last session, seem to think they have sufficiently refuted him, and destroyed his political reputation when they have shown that he has avowed the doctrine of universal suffrage. These whig members say more severe things against our truly democratic Governor, but evidently in their own minds, they think the severest thing they say is that, he favors universal suffrage. Everywhere you

find the whigs opposing universal suffrage, and surrounding the exercise of the right of suffrage by the laborer, with as many difficulties as possible. In Baltimore, Philadelphia, New-York, they have shown by their Registry laws, what they would do if they could.

But the democratic party is, and always has been the universal suffrage party. It has ever held that suffrage is an incident of Humanity and not an incident of property. It has been constantly laboring from the formation of our government, to extend the exercise of this right, and to render its exercise as easy as is compatible with its honest exercise.

Here then again the party proves its sympathy with the great work given us, and that it is the true American party, and therefore the party of Humanity.

Again, the democratic party is the party of freedom of thought and utterance. Mind is superior to matter. All reforms, all progress pre-exist in thought before they are realized in fact. Thought precedes action, and the human race is carried forward only by the action of mind upon mind. The mind must be free to look through society, to see it as it is, to inquire the remedy demanded, the reforms which are practicable, and to proclaim the results of its inquiries, or society cannot advance.

Look over your old Asiatic world. Why are the nations there struck with the curse of immobility? Why do ages on ages roll away and bring no change? Why is all there as still and as putrid as the stagnant pool on whose surface no breeze ever stirs a ripple? All there is silent, sombre, monotonous; for there is no freedom to the mind. Tyranny has entered into the soul, and struck man in the interior sanctuary of his being. He has no power to think; he does not reason; cannot reflect. He is the slave of custom, of habit, of routine, and follows on in the track of his forefathers in one endless round. O, there is a worse slavery than that of the



body. The cords with which you bind my limbs shall be as flax at the touch of fire, if you will but leave free my power of thought. Carry free thought to your degraded serf, to your down-trodden millions of the old world; let them dare investigate their condition, look their masters in the face, and ask whence comes it that we are what we are; and forthwith their fetters snap, an unwonted power nerves their arms, thrones totter, nobilities fall, and they stand up men, free men, in the image of their Maker, and look around with love and joy on the face of brothers.

Now the democratic party has always been the party of freedom for the mind. It has uniformly opposed all test laws, all shackles on a free press, and said that "error is harmless if reason be left free to combat her."

We have much to do. We see the end we would gain, but see not clearly the means of attaining it. We must inquire. Many minds must be active; and all schemes must be brought forward and canvassed; all opinions weighed, all systems examined before we can be in a condition to finish our work. But we cannot do this unless we are left free to think, and free to utter our thoughts, either by speech or the press. In espousing this freedom of mind, "soul-liberty," and in defending the freedom of speech and the press, the democratic party has been true to the American mission.

America is Freedom's chosen land. It is to Freedom what Palestine was to Piety; and if the Jews were God's chosen people, to develope and realize the religious element of human nature, Americans are not less the chosen people of God to develope and realize the social element, and with it the true idea of a man. Their soil is sacred to liberty. No species of tyranny must dwell in it; no tyrant's foot must desecrate it. Of all tyrants, he who would penetrate into the soul and rivet his fetters on thought itself, is the worst. And the curses of Humanity

should fall as hail-stones upon the head of whomsoever would compel the prophet of God, him to whom God has given a word, to lock up that word in his own bosom and die with it unuttered. Democracy is true to freedom; she compels not the prophets of God to wander the earth in sheep-skin and goat-skin garments, to dwell apart in lonely caves, or in the mountains; but says to them, Come forth; ye who have aught to speak, speak freely, speak boldly, out of your own full hearts and from your own strong convictions. We will not make the word of God a burden to you, nor compel you to withhold the words for the want of which nations may fare the worse.

It is this, more than any thing else, which proves the sympathy of the democratic party with American principles. While the whig party advocate alien and sedition laws, gag laws under the elder Adams, and introduces into the Senate even to-day under pretence of guarding the purity of elections, a law intended to gag every man of the democratic party whose influence they dread, the democratic party says, give the widest range to thought, and the utmost freedom to utterance.

The democratic party looks beyond even political equality, and aims at social equality. It wars against privilege and monopoly. It seeks to open the field to every man, to secure to every man equal chances. While the whig party labors to lock up the whole capital of the country in close corporations, to give to these corporations the monopoly of every branch of industry, thus compelling the laborer to sustain towards these corporations the same relation which the villeins formerly sustained towards the landlord, the democratic party has opposed, with what success it could, all corporations which conceal the monopoly principle, or which confer any special privilege on the corporators.

Here again the party is true to the American mission.



It labors not merely for the chiefs of the industrious class, but for the individual laborer, and watches over his freedom and independence, as its most precious treasure.

In the recent controversy with the Bank party, the democracy has been faithful to the same cause. The establishment of a United States Bank, as the completion of the Bank hierarchy, and the making of it the depository of the revenues of the government, would have for its direct and inevitable result, the bringing of the government under the control of the business community. It would be making the business men, in contradistinction from the agricultural and laboring community, the actual rulers of the government. It would then be a direct departure from the end we have to seek. It would be abandoning all that was gained by our Revolution, it would be deserting our post, and giving up the sacred soil of Freedom to the enemy. It was necessary then to oppose the Bank, to prevent its re-establishment. It was also necessary for the government to dissolve entirely its connexion with banks and the business of banking, and to collect and keep and disburse its own revenues.

Hence, the opposition to the Bank, and to our present system of banking, on the one hand, and the establishment on the other hand of the independent treasury. Both these measures were necessary to keep the government free from the special control of a particular class of the community, and open to the whole people. And open to the whole people, recognizing no classes, seeking only the elevation of each individual man, it must be kept, if we would be true to the cause for which our fathers fought.

Tried, then, by the rule I have laid down, it must be evident to all, that the Whig policy should be reprobated by every American, and the democratic policy be sus-

tained by every man who would see America proving faithful to the cause of her glorious Revolution.

Fellow Citizens, I have detained you long, and you, as well as I, are, no doubt, fatigued. But I have felt it due to the cause which assembles us together, this day, with calmness and yet with earnestness, to state as clearly as I could the real nature of the contest in which we are now engaged. I have felt that this contest is the same with that in which our fathers took their part, sixty-four years ago, that it is no ephemeral contest, no contest about men, nor about offices; but about great and everlasting principles. I have wished to show you that the election which approaches, marks a crisis not less important than that which our Fathers met, and met so nobly. I have wished to show you that more than yourselves are interested in the contest now going on between whigs and democrats, more than your posterity, more than your whole country. In the fierce controversy now raging from one end of the Union to the other, entire Humanity again mingles, and takes part. The cause of modern civilization is to be decided next November, at the American ballot box. There is to be fought the great battle for the race. Every American citizen is a soldier in the grand army of Humanity, or in the ranks of her enemies. Not often does it fall to the lot of us, human beings, to be actors in so great a struggle, not often are so high and so awful responsibilities imposed upon us.

I have wished to make this felt; and I have wished also to ascertain over which of the two camps into which the whole American people are now drawn out, floats in the breeze the broad banner of Humanity, the banner of civilization, of freedom, of God. I see that banner. I see it floating over the camp of the democracy. They to-day are the army of mankind, they fight for the race, for truth, for freedom, and my heart leaps to join them. There in their camp, under their tents, in



their ranks, should every true American say, is my place, and there will I do my duty come what may.

And float in triumph, too, shall that broad banner. Slow and toilsome has been the progress of the race; oft has it been defeated; oft has it been driven back; oft have its serried ranks been broken, its forces scattered, and its cause trampled in the dust. But ever has it rallied anew to the contest. Never has its courage failed, and never shall fail. It rallied anew sixty-four years ago, and bid the world hear and respect. It rallies again to-day, and utters its manifesto, and on the altar of millions of beating hearts, swears it will march to victory. Humanity stands now on a vantage ground. Fear not then for the result. Soldiers, in the army of Humanity, Soldiers for freedom, for progress, for right, for man, to your posts. Above the din of battle hear a voice cheering on to the combat; coming from the degraded millions of the old world, from the nations trodden down by kings, hierarchies and nobilities. They call to you; they bid you be true, true, for their emancipation as well as your freedom depends on the issue of the battle you are about to give. Hear them, and let your hearts be firm, and your arms strong. The spirits of your fathers are with you; nay, the spirits of all who have bled for freedom from Marathon, Plataea and Salamis to Bunker's Hill, and Saratoga, and Yorktown, are with you, animate you to combat, fight with you, and will secure your triumph.

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THE END.